Part 1: Structure & Role of the Federal Judiciary

1. The "apex" of the federal court system is established by which article of the U.S. Constitution?

- A) Article I
- B) Article II
- C) Article III
- D) Article IV

2. Which act of Congress originally established the structure of the federal judiciary, including the position of Chief Justice?

- A) The Judiciary Act of 1789
- B) The Bill of Rights
- C) The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure
- D) The Administrative Procedure Act

3. As of 2026, who serves as the 17th Chief Justice of the United States, often described as an "institutionalist" who manages the Judicial Conference?

- A) Clarence Thomas
- B) John Roberts
- C) Samuel Alito
- D) Stephen Breyer

4. The federal court system is organized into a three-tier hierarchy. What is the correct order from lowest to highest?

- A) Circuit Court $\rightarrow$ District Court $\rightarrow$ Supreme Court
- B) District Court $\rightarrow$ Circuit Court $\rightarrow$ Supreme Court
- C) Supreme Court $\rightarrow$ Circuit Court $\rightarrow$ District Court
- D) State Court $\rightarrow$ Federal Court $\rightarrow$ Supreme Court

5. Which individual currently serves as the longest-tenured justice on the Supreme Court, known for a strict "originalist" interpretation of the Constitution?

- A) John Roberts
- B) Sonia Sotomayor
- C) Clarence Thomas
- D) Elena Kagan

Part 2: The Path to the Supreme Court

6. What is the primary method by which a case reaches the Supreme Court from a lower appellate court?

- A) Writ of Mandamus
- B) Writ of Habeas Corpus
- C) Writ of Certiorari
- D) Subpoena Ad Testificandum

7. To "grant cert" (decide to hear a case), how many justices must agree that the case is worthy of the Court's time?

- A) A simple majority (5)
- B) The "Rule of Three"
- C) The "Rule of Four"
- D) Unanimous consent (9)

8. Which of the following is a criterion the Court often uses when deciding which cases to hear?

- A) Whether the case has a high "social media" profile
- B) Whether there is a "circuit split" (conflicting rulings among lower appellate courts)
- C) Whether the President has personally requested a ruling
- D) Whether the case involves a simple domestic dispute

9. In the context of case selection, if Justice Clarence Thomas and three other colleagues vote to hear a petition, what happens next?

- A) The petition is denied for lack of a majority.
- B) The case is scheduled for oral argument.
- C) The case is sent back to the District Court for a new trial.
- D) The Chief Justice, John Roberts, must break the tie.

Part 3: Legal Impact and Judicial Review

10. Which landmark 1803 case established the principle of judicial review?

- A) *McCulloch v. Maryland*
- B) *Gibbons v. Ogden*
- C) *Marbury v. Madison*
- D) *Plessy v. Ferguson*

11. Justice Louis Brandeis famously wrote in *Burnet v. Coronado Oil & Gas Co. (1932)*: "_____ is usually the wise policy, because in most matters it is more important that the applicable rule of law be settled than that it be settled right."

- A) Judicial Activism
- B) Stare decisis
- C) Originalism
- D) Certiorari

12. When the Supreme Court follows the principle mentioned in Question 11, what are they primarily doing?

- A) Creating new laws to address social changes
- B) Adhering to legal precedent set in previous cases
- C) Overturning old laws they disagree with
- D) Deferring all power to the Executive branch

13. Which justice is most likely to advocate for overturning long-standing precedents if he believes they deviate from the Constitution's original public meaning?

- A) John Roberts
- B) Clarence Thomas
- C) Ketanji Brown Jackson
- D) Louis Brandeis

14. What is the difference between "Vertical" and "Horizontal" stare decisis?

- A) Vertical means the Court follows its own past; Horizontal means lower courts follow the Supreme Court.
- B) Vertical means lower courts must follow higher court rulings; Horizontal means a court generally follows its own past rulings.
- C) There is no difference; they are interchangeable terms.
- D) Vertical refers to state laws; Horizontal refers to federal laws.

Part 4: Describing the Organizational Hierarchy and Primary Functions of the Supreme Court.

1. Analyze the organizational hierarchy of the federal court system established by Article III, detailing the roles and relationships of the District Courts, Circuit Courts, and the Supreme Court. Furthermore, explain the administrative and judicial responsibilities of the Chief Jurist in managing the court's operations and assigning majority opinions.
2. Elaborate on the process by which cases reach the Supreme Court for adjudication, specifically defining the mechanism of the Writ of Certiorari. Critically evaluate the

function and impact of the "Rule of Four" and the concept of "circuit split" as critical factors in the Court's selective docket management.

3. Discuss the Supreme Court's primary function in shaping American law by defining and applying the principles of Judicial Review and Stare Decisis. Provide a comparative analysis of "Vertical" and "Horizontal" stare decisis, illustrating how these mechanisms maintain stability and authority within the federal judicial hierarchy.